

# *You and your home— A resident's guide for senior citizens*

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Ministry  
of  
Housing

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## *Local telephone numbers for ready reference*

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*Number*

*Fire* \_\_\_\_\_

*Police* \_\_\_\_\_

*Ambulance* \_\_\_\_\_

*Doctor* \_\_\_\_\_

*Druggist* \_\_\_\_\_

*Housing Authority Office* \_\_\_\_\_

*Caretaker* \_\_\_\_\_

*Community Relations Worker* \_\_\_\_\_

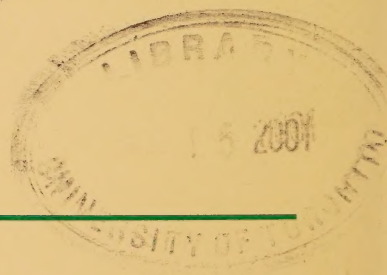
*Rent Account Number* \_\_\_\_\_

*Buddy* \_\_\_\_\_

*Nearest friend or relative* \_\_\_\_\_

*Clergyman* \_\_\_\_\_

*Taxi* \_\_\_\_\_



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*Dear Resident:*

*Welcome to your new home!*

*This booklet has been produced to answer any questions you may have at this time, and to answer questions that may occur to you after you have lived here for a while.*

*If you have a question, or if any problem arises, don't hesitate to phone your caretaker or your housing authority office.*

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## *On moving in*

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*We hope you will be happy and comfortable in your new home, which has been specially designed with the needs of senior citizens in mind.*

*We encourage you to inspect everything in your apartment as soon as you move in.*

*In particular, make sure all the appliances and fixtures are in good working order.*

*You can report any damaged, defective or missing items by completing the Maintenance Inspection Form and returning it to the housing authority office. This way, we'll know you're not responsible for this damage.*



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## *Your new apartment*

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*This is your own apartment from which you may come and go as you please. However, a senior citizen apartment building provides a community type of living that may be new to you.*

*Your neighbours are much closer, separated by only a floor, a ceiling or a wall. We ask you to remember that sound travels. Please be considerate of your neighbours when playing your radio, stereo or television set, particularly at night.*

*If you plan a holiday, please let your caretaker or housing authority office know how long you will be away. This way people will not worry if they do not see you for a while.*

*Your rent is based on a geared-to-income scale approved by the federal and provincial governments. Rents are due on the first day of each month. For your convenience, you may provide the management office with 12 post-dated cheques to cover your rent. Your rent includes all services with the exception of telephone, cable television and all coin-operated laundry equipment.*

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## *Your lease*

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*The lease you have signed is a simple but important document. It sets out both your responsibilities and ours. You should be familiar with its contents.*

*If you have any questions about your lease, please discuss them with your housing authority office.*

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## *Pets*

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*Domestic pets are not allowed in most types of buildings. Therefore it is imperative that you check with your housing authority office. If you are given written permission to keep a pet, you will naturally be expected to maintain proper control over it at all times and observe all local regulations.*

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## Keys

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*You have been given two keys. One key will open the main door to the building and some service doors, such as the laundry room. The other key, which is exclusively yours, opens the door to your apartment.*

*For safety reasons your caretaker or security tenant has access to a complete set of duplicate keys. If you lose your key, or should you forget it and require assistance to gain entry, a charge may be made for this service. If there is a charge you will be notified by the housing authority manager.*

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## Guests

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*If you plan to have a guest stay for several days, please remember to tell your caretaker or housing authority office so that he won't be concerned about strangers in the building. Unauthorized, long-term occupants could result in the termination of your lease.*



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## *Fire prevention and safety*

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*Senior citizen buildings in Ontario have many special features which have been included for your safety and comfort. There are special alarm systems and there is a system of emergency power.*

*In addition, each apartment is equipped with at least one automatic smoke alarm which will give out a loud, beeping sound when there are signs of smoke. If you hear this piercing sound in your apartment, investigate immediately. If the fire cannot be safely and immediately extinguished you should get all occupants out and close the apartment door. Sound the fire alarm and leave building via the nearest exit.*

*If you hear this piercing sound from an apartment nearby, investigate immediately. If no one within the suite responds, sound the fire alarm and leave the building by nearest exit.*

### **NEVER DISCONNECT YOUR SMOKE**

**ALARM.** *The warning devices on the smoke alarm will not work when the circuit breaker switch is in the "off" position or the fuse is disconnected.*

*In many seniors' buildings there are special fire exits and "controlled doors". Where indicated, these controlled doors must be kept closed at all times. Get to know the location of fire exits as soon as possible.*

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*It is in your best interest to follow these basic safety rules in your apartment:*

*Be sure to turn off your stove when you have finished cooking.*

*Check your electrical appliances from time to time for frayed or broken cords.*

*Don't accumulate trash in cupboards.*

### **DO NOT SMOKE IN BED**

*From time to time you will receive bulletins concerning fire precautions in your building. Instructions will also be posted. These instructions must be followed faithfully. If you have any questions, ask your caretaker. Your caretaker and housing authority office maintain close contact with both fire and police officials so that every precaution is taken at all times.*

### **Child safety**

*If your apartment is above ground level, you should be aware that there are special dangers related to balconies and window areas where small children are concerned.*

*If children visit you, please watch these areas closely.*

*If you are taking life saving medicines prescribed by your doctor, please let your caretaker or housing authority office know where you keep these so that they can find them for you in an emergency.*

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## *Common rooms*

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*Common rooms are provided in most buildings for your comfort and enjoyment. In most cases, these rooms are furnished with easy chairs and sofas. Card tables and chairs are usually available as well.*

*Common rooms are for relaxing. They can be used for taking a rest, or for chatting with friends and neighbours.*

*Common rooms may be used for organized activities arranged by your tenant committee. They can also be booked for significant events such as anniversaries. If you want to use the common room to celebrate a special occasion, speak to your tenant committee and your caretaker or housing authority office.*

*Common rooms are primarily for the use of the residents of the building. They are not to be used by outside groups to the exclusion of other tenants.*

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## *The buddy system*

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*In spite of all the care in design and layout of apartments, accidents can occur. Illness or sudden attacks can also leave a person in need of assistance.*

*For these reasons, it is most desirable that some form of a “BUDDY SYSTEM” be established.*

*A buddy system is a co-operative arrangement whereby each tenant is paired with another as “buddies”. One resident of each pair should ensure, by telephone or personal visit, at least once each day, the well-being of the other.*

*Talk to your caretaker or housing authority office about this. Meet and work out an agreeable arrangement with your “buddy” as soon as possible.*



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## *Tenant committees*

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*There is usually some kind of activity going on in and around senior citizen buildings. This is almost always due to the work of an active tenant committee.*

*Sometimes the people who 'run things' call themselves a tenant committee, sometimes it's a social committee, and sometimes it's just an executive committee. No matter what they are called, they are a group of your fellow residents who have agreed to help plan and organize programs and activities for the benefit of all.*

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*Here is a list of some of the activities that might be carried on by tenant committees: cards, bingo, film nights, musicals, crafts, outings, dances, charitable work, bake sales, and bazaars.*

*Your tenant committee members are usually elected at an annual meeting. If you have particular skills or talents to offer, or have had experience in church work or in social areas, let the committee know. They'll welcome your ideas and assistance.*

*It is usual for the caretaker and the housing manager to work closely with the committee members on matters involving the affairs of the building. Such a committee provides an excellent channel of communication between the residents and management.*

*Most programs are the result of a lot of hard work and planning. You are encouraged to support these programs wherever possible. Of course, if you are moving into a new building, all of these programs may need to be developed, including the setting up of a committee.*

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## *Your caretaker*

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*All caretakers are encouraged to become interested in the well-being of the residents and to provide as much service as may be practical from time to time.*

*Your caretaker's main responsibility is for the maintenance and cleanliness of the building, lobbies, hallways, laundry rooms and common rooms.*

*With all this to look after, it is surprising but nice to know that so many of our caretakers can find time to change a light bulb for someone, or provide some other small service. A caretaker will usually be pleased to co-operate with tenant committees if it is necessary to re-arrange common room furniture for special meetings. But please understand that this is not part of the caretaker's normal duties.*

*You will find your caretaker to be most helpful and deserving of your co-operation.*

*In buildings where there is no caretaker please work with the housing authority office.*



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## *Your community relations worker*

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*If you live in one of the larger cities you will soon be hearing about and meeting your C.R. W. — your Community Relations Worker.*

*Your C.R. W is that member of your local management team who is trained and qualified to assist residents in any matters which may affect their well-being.*

*It is the job of the C.R. W to know about community services and activities as well as to provide, on request, support to tenant committees and social groups. In areas where C.R. W.s have not been assigned, the caretaker and the housing authority manager are available to provide assistance.*

*Experience tells us that a visit from the C.R. W is a welcome event for many senior citizens. We hope you will soon have an opportunity to understand why this is so.*

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# Gardening

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*A senior citizen building is often one of the most attractive areas in a community. This is because we recognize the importance of green areas, landscaping, and ground maintenance.*

*It is often the result, too, of the fact that many of our residents have “green thumbs.”*

*Plantings can be seen around the bases of trees, alongside patios and windows and on balconies.*

*Ask your caretaker or housing authority office where and how you can help to keep your home beautiful with flowers and plants. In many communities garden plots are available on the property.*

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## *Plumbing fixtures and drains*

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*We would like to make a few suggestions about the use of your sink, toilet, basin and bath.*

*Use cleaning materials that are free of harsh abrasives. We may have to hold you responsible for repairs if your drains become clogged. We are talking about grease, hair, tea leaves and other materials that obviously plug drains. The toilet bowl may crack if you pour hot water into it.*

*If something does not seem to be working correctly, please let your caretaker or housing authority office know. Small problems have a way of becoming big problems if left unattended.*



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## *Appliances*

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*Each apartment is supplied with a stove and refrigerator which will give good service if looked after properly.*

*Please remember when cleaning or defrosting your refrigerator that kettles of boiling water can damage its interior and that sharp objects could pierce the refrigerator coils. If appliances are damaged through carelessness or misuse, we may have to consider holding you responsible.*

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## *Painted walls and woodwork*

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*You will find that regularly washed walls and woodwork are easy to keep clean and attractive. Any good mild soap or detergent will be satisfactory. Harsh cleaners will mar and fade the paint and spoil its appearance.*

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## *Mirrors and pictures*

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*As builders use different kinds of wall material, consult your caretaker or housing authority office about the type of fastener to be used for mounting pictures and mirrors.*

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## *Laundry rooms*

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*Nearly all senior citizen buildings have laundry rooms which are shared by all residents. If you are concerned about how to use either the washers or dryers, please call your caretaker or ask your neighbour. (We'd recommend asking your neighbour, who could well turn out to be your first friend in the building.)*

*In many buildings, there will be a schedule posted in the laundry room. This schedule tells each resident when they can use the machines. Please co-operate and use the machines when it is your turn. If you find it difficult to use your allotted time, speak to the caretaker or housing authority office who may be able to re-arrange the schedule to better suit your needs.*

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